

The Plan Of Salvation According To God's Word

"This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth"(1 Timothy 2: 3-4).

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance"(2 Peter 3: 9).

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this study on the Plan of Salvation. The issue of your salvation is the most important matter you will ever face in your life. This study will guide you to know how God has provided for your salvation through Jesus and your response to what he has done for you.

Ideally, it would be good for you to go through this study with someone who has been a Christian for a few years and is familiar with the content in this study. However, if you do not have anyone available to help you, I believe you can learn a lot by going through it yourself.

For those of you using this study to teach others it would be good to study these verses thoroughly so you can answer any questions that might come up. If questions do come up that you cannot answer right away, ask for time to study and research these issues and get back with your student. Always remember also to pray for guidance, wisdom and patience as you teach others.

Be ready for the Holy Spirit to work in your life as a teacher and in the life of those you are teaching.

May God use this study to bring many people to salvation in Jesus and have a purposeful and victorious life here and now.

It is my hope that all those who go through (or are led through) this study and give their lives to Christ will then in turn use it to teach someone else so the process will continue.


May the love and grace of Jesus be with you as you seek to know the way of salvation and commit yourself to follow Jesus.

For all those who lead others through this study, may God give you a Spirit of wisdom, revelation, courage, patience and love as you gently lead people to the water of life. Remember also that when people commit their lives to Christ this is only the beginning. They need to go forward in deep discipleship.¹

Paul Highfield - 2013

THE BIBLE: MANY DIFFERENT BOOKS BUT ONE STORY

There is the Old Testament and the New Testament, but there is one story and the cross unites the two Testaments.

Old Testament	Cross 	New Testament
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The Old Testament was written before Jesus came to this world. It is about the beginning of the world, the fall of man into sin, the extent of the wickedness of all men, the flood, God starting over with Noah and his family, the scattering of the nations, and the call of Abraham and his descendants who were called Israel. God's plan or mission was to bring people back to him. He chose to do this by calling Abraham and promising to bless him and make him a blessing to the nations. This could actually be called the first great commission.

Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarai. Then Jacob and Esau were born to Isaac. Jacob had 12 sons, one of which was Joseph. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, but God was with him and he became an important official in Egypt. Later there was a famine and Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to look for food. They did not know Joseph at first, but then he forgave them and revealed himself to them. After this Jacob himself went to live in Egypt. But after Joseph died a new king came to power who began to persecute the people of Israel. The people of Israel were persecuted and in bondage in Egypt for 400 years. Then God called Moses, who became a mighty leader, to lead them out of bondage to the promised land. Their deliverance from Egypt was an example of the deliverance God gives to all those who believe in Jesus and obey him. God gave

Israel commandments to follow and he planned that Israel would become a witness to all the people of the earth. He wanted the nations to see His love, discipline and care through Israel. He also wanted Israel and all the nations to see how they needed him and could not live a holy life apart from him.

Israel later had judges and kings to lead them as well as prophets to tell them the Word of God. But the people sinned, God sent judgment on them, and their land was destroyed.

But God had a plan to bring them back to their land and to send his servant, the Messiah, to Israel as the perfect Israelite to share with them the good news of salvation. So, his prophets foretold of the day when this promised servant Messiah would come.

One day God sent his only Son to the people to live among them and show them love and the power of God. He taught that people should believe in him as the Son of God, repent and be born again. But many of them thought he was an imposter so they rejected and crucified him. Yet, by the power of God, he rose from the dead and appeared to many people.

After this, he gave his disciples the second great commission commanding them to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them the commands of Jesus (Matthew 28: 18-20). This commission was a continuation of the first commission God gave to Abraham in Genesis 12. Then Jesus went back to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to his followers. They began to tell others the good news of Jesus that he died for their sins, rose from the dead, and if they believed in him, repented and were baptized, they could receive forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit, and become part of a his church.

When Jesus went back to heaven he promised to come again one day to judge the world and receive those who believe in him.

It is now the responsibility of all Christians to continue the mission of God by sharing the gospel with others and demonstrating the compassion of Jesus by deeds of love and kindness.²

What is the Nature of the Bible?

We will be using the New International Version of the Bible for this study, with the exception of 1 Peter 3: 21 on page 28.

1. According to **2 Timothy 3: 16 and 17** all Scripture (the Bible) is _____.
2. According to **2 Peter 1: 20, 21**, the prophecy of Scripture did not come by the prophet's own _____. Neither did it have its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from _____ as they were carried along by the _____.
3. The Word of God says in **1 Thessalonians 2: 13** that the Word of God is not the word of _____, but the Word of _____ which is at work in those who _____.
4. According to **Hebrews 4: 12** the Word of God is living and _____ and sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the _____ and the _____ of our hearts.
5. **Psalms 119 : 86** says that the commandments of God are _____.
6. According to **Psalms 119: 160** all the words of God are _____ and all his righteous laws are _____.
7. Who are those who are blessed according to **Matthew 5: 6**?³

Answers to The Nature of the Bible: 1. God-breathed; 2. interpretation, God, Holy Spirit; 3. men, God, believe; 4. active, thoughts, attitudes; 5. trustworthy; 6. true and eternal; 7. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Who is Jesus?

What do these verses say about who Jesus is?

John 1: 1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the _____ was with God, and the Word was _____. He was with God in the beginning."

John 1: 14, "The Word became _____ and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the _____, full of grace and _____."

John 4: 25-26 - He claimed to be the _____.

John 5: 17, "Jesus said to them, 'My _____ is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.' "

John 5: 18, "For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him, not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own _____, making himself _____ with God."

John 5: 21-23, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the _____ gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the _____, that all may _____ the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the _____, who sent him." (Even though Jesus is speaking in the third person in 5: 21-23, it is obvious by the context that he is referring to himself when he talks about the Son.)

John 5: 37 – Jesus said that the _____ who sent him testifies concerning him.

John 6: 40 - Jesus said, “For my Father’s will is that every one who looks to the _____ and believes in him shall have _____, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:48 - He said, “I am the _____ of life.”

John 7:17 - He said, “If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from _____ or whether I speak on my own.”

John 8: 31, 32, “To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the _____, and the truth will set you _____.’”

John 8: 58, “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, _____!”

So, this shows that he was _____ and _____ even before he came to this earth.

John 10: 9 - He said, “I am the _____: whoever enters through me will be _____.”

John 10: 14, 15 – He said, “I am the _____; I know my sheep and my sheep know me - just as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

John 10: 30 – He said, “I and the _____ are one.”

John 10: 36b – He said, “Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, I am _____?”

John 11: 25, “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the _____ and the _____. He who _____ in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.’”

John 12: 44-46, “Then Jesus cried out, ‘When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the _____ _____. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a _____ so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.’”

John 14: 6, “Jesus answered, ‘I am the _____ and the _____ and the _____. No one comes to the Father except through _____.’”

John 15: 5 – He said, “I am the _____; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do _____.”

John 18: 36 – In answer to Pilate, “Jesus said, ‘My _____ is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.’”

John 18:37 – He went on to say, “You are right in saying I am a _____. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the _____. Everyone on the side of truth listens to _____.”

John 19:7 - Speaking concerning Jesus, John says, “The Jews insisted, ‘We have a law and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the _____ _____.’”

Answer to blanks under John 8: 58: "I am" and "alive" and "existed."

So, in your own words, who do you think Jesus is according to all these verses?

According to Matthew 16: 16 and Colossians 1: 15, who is Jesus?⁴

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

The Problem

"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6: 23a).

**Men, women
and children
old enough
to believe.**

(humanity)

God

The Problem

How do these verses describe the problem we have outside of Christ?

** John 3: 19, 20

** Romans 3: 10

** Romans 3: 23

** Romans 5: 6a

** Romans 5: 10a

** Romans 6:16-18

** Romans 6: 23

** Ephesians 2: 1, 2

**Ephesians 2: 11, 12

** Colossians 1: 21

** Isaiah 59: 2

** Isaiah 64: 6

** Jeremiah 2: 13

** Jeremiah 17: 9

** Hebrews 9: 27 – According to this verse we must all
_____ and face _____.

The Problem - Another way to look at our problem.

Have you ever told a lie?

Have you ever lusted after another person?

Have you ever stolen anything?

Have you ever put anything before worship of God?

Have you ever taken the name of God in vain or said a curse word?

Have you ever had hate in your heart toward another person?

Have you ever spoken against your mother or father?

Have you ever said anything that was not true about another person?

Have you ever desired to have anything that belongs to another person?

If you have ever done any of these things, you have sinned and are in need of a Savior. You may not have done all of them, but you probably have done most of them. The Bible says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3: 23). Also note Romans 5: 20 and Galatians 3: 19-25.

We are weak.

We are sinful.

We are enemies of God.

We are in darkness.

We cannot save ourselves.

What can we do?

The Provision or Solution

The cross/blood of Christ
Romans 5: 9; 1 Peter 1: 18-19
"Gift of God" – Romans 6: 23b

The Problem

"For the wages of sin is death ..."
(Romans 6: 23).

Believe, repent, confess, receive Jesus as Lord and Savior, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the Holy Spirit (John 3: 16; Acts 2: 38; Romans 10: 9, 10; 6: 1-3). God's grace makes all this possible (Ephesians 2: 8-10).

The Provision or Solution

God's plan before we were born.

1. God created all things good, but gave man:

_____ Genesis 2: 16-17

_____ Genesis 3: 6

_____ Genesis 3: 16-19

2. Man chose to sin by saying _____ to God's way
(Genesis 3: 6, 7).

3. The result was that _____ came to the world
(Romans 5: 12).

4. God had a plan to bring man back to himself.

God called a man named Abraham. He promised to bless him and his descendants who were called Israelites. Through them came judges, kings, prophets and eventually a Savior was born, Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. He lived, died and rose from the dead to set us free, forgive us and bring us back into fellowship with God (Genesis 12: 1-3; Matthew 1: 1-25).

5. What does **John 3: 16** say about God's plan?

6. In **Romans 5: 6 - 8** the Bible says that Jesus came at just the right time when we were _____ . While we were still _____ Christ died for us. Jesus died for us before we were even born; at that time we were totally powerless. This was a completely gracious act of his to save us.⁵

Answers to God's Plan before we were born: 1. a commandment, freedom to choose, and consequences; 2. no; 3. alienation; 6. still, powerless, sinners.

The Provision or Solution -- To understand why Jesus came into the world.

According to these verses, why did Jesus come into the world?

1. Mark 10: 45 _____

2. Luke 4: 18, 19 _____

(The year of the "Lord's Favor" was called Jubilee. This was when debts were forgiven, land restored to their original owners and slaves released. Here it is used by Jesus in a spiritual way to refer to forgiveness and new beginnings.)

3. John 1: 10-13 _____

4. John 1: 18 _____

5. John 1: 29 _____

6. John 3: 17 _____

6. John 9: 39 _____

7. Jesus not only came to die, but also came to be
_____ to life for our _____ (Romans
4: 25).

8. Without the resurrection of Jesus our preaching is _____
and our faith is _____ according to 1 Corinthians
15: 14-17.

9. 2 Corinthians 5: 17

10. 2 Corinthians 5: 21

Answers to why Jesus came into the world: 7. raised, justification;
8. useless, futile.

The Provision or Solution – The Blood of Christ - Reconciliation through his death

1. According to **Romans 3: 25** we need to have faith in the _____ of Jesus.
2. It is by the blood of Jesus that we are _____ and _____ according to **Romans 5: 9**.
3. According to **Romans 5: 10** we are reconciled to God through _____. If we are reconciled we are also _____ through his life.
4. We have what two things through Jesus' blood according to **Ephesians 1: 7**? _____ and _____.
5. What has saved us from our empty way of life according to **1 Peter 1: 17-19**?

Answers to the solution – the Blood of Christ: 1. blood; 2. justified and saved from God's wrath; 3. the death of his Son, saved; 4. redemption and forgiveness of sins; 5. the precious blood of Christ;

The Provision or Solution – God’s Grace

1. Because of God’s grace, he uses his Holy Spirit to convict our hearts to help us believe. What does **John 16: 8** say about this? When the Holy Spirit comes he will _____ the world of guilt in regard to _____ and _____ and _____.

2. When the people who crucified Jesus heard the truth, **Acts 2: 37** says they were _____ to the heart. Who do you think was working in their hearts to convict them of this sin?
_____.

3. **Romans 3: 22-24** says we are justified _____ by God’s grace.

4. According to **Ephesians 2: 8, 9** we are saved by _____ through _____ but not by _____ so that no one can _____.

Answers for God's Grace: 1. convict, sin, righteousness, judgment; 2. cut, the Holy Spirit; 3. freely; 4. grace, faith, works, boast.

The Provision or Solution – Faith, Belief and Trust Our response to God’s grace

We need to believe the Scriptures we have studied.

They say:

We are sinners.

We have a problem.

We need a Savior.

That Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

That he rose from the dead for our justification.

That we can have salvation through his blood by God’s grace.

That we will die and face judgment.

1. Hebrews 11: 1 says, "Now faith is being _____ of what we hope for and _____ of what we do not see."

2. Hebrews 11: 6 says that if we do not have faith, we cannot _____ God.

3. Jesus said in John 5: 24 that if we _____ his word and _____ in God, we will have what? _____

4. Romans 3: 21-22 says that we are made right before God through _____ in _____.

5. In Galatians 3: 26-29, Paul connects faith with what?

6. If faith does not include our active response it is _____ according to James 2: 17, 26.

Answers about Faith: 1. sure, certain 2. please; 3. hear, believe, eternal life; 4. faith in Jesus Christ; 5. baptism; 6. dead.

There are three aspects to faith: **Understanding, Assent** (agreeing), and **Trust**. Faith is understanding, agreeing with and trusting that what God has said about our condition outside of Christ and about Jesus is true. It is also totally committing your life to Jesus and believing in him no matter what difficulties may arise.

Faith is the conduit or channel by which we are saved. This faith is active, alive and fruitful. Having true faith does not mean you will never have doubts. But remember to always let your doubts drive you toward God and not away from him.

The Provision or Solution – Confession and Repentance - Our response to God's grace

Confession has two parts: confession of sin and confession of Jesus as Lord.

Confession of Sin

1. According to **Nehemiah 9: 1-3**, what did the people of Israel do because of their sins?

2. The writer of **Psalms 32: 5** may have been David as he was feeling convicted about his sin of adultery. David said he would not cover up his _____. He said that he would _____ his transgressions to the Lord.

3. In **Psalms 38: 18** David said, "I confess my _____; I am troubled by my _____."

4. The people who responded to John the Baptist's message are a good example of those who confessed their sins. **Mark 1: 5** says that all the people went out to him _____ their sins.

5. The Bible clearly says that believing alone is not enough. A good example of this is found in **John 12: 42-43**. Why did these leaders not confess their faith?

6. **Acts 19: 18-19** says that many in Ephesus openly _____ their evil deeds.

Confession of Jesus as Lord

7. Jesus himself says, in **Matthew 10: 32-33**, that we should _____ him before men.

8. According to **Romans 10: 9, 10** what should we confess with our mouths:

_____. (Note: Some have used this passage to say that all one has to do is confess and believe to be saved. However, in the early church they used this confession at the time of baptism showing that confession and baptism go together in the process of salvation. Also, Paul clearly says in Romans 6: 1-3 that we are baptized **into** Christ.)

9. Paul says in **Colossians 2: 6-7** that they received Jesus as _____.

<p>Answers to Confession of Sin: 1. confessed; 2. iniquity, confess; 3. iniquity, sin; 4. confessing; 5. because of fear; 6. confessed. Confession of Jesus as Lord: 7. acknowledge; 8. that Jesus is Lord; 9. Lord.</p>
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10. In **1 Timothy 6: 12** Paul encourages his brother Timothy to take hold of eternal life to which he was called when he made his _____ in the presence of many _____.

(This shows confession was probably a regular practice in New Testament times. When one was ready to commit his life to Christ he would confess and be baptized before witnesses.)

11. According to **2 Timothy 2: 19**, those who confess should also _____.

12. In **Acts 19: 18, 19** the people _____ their evil deeds. This led them to _____ their scrolls publicly. This shows that true confession leads to repentance, which is totally turning away from the old life and turning back to God and the new life.⁶

Repentance

Repentance is completely renouncing your sins and old sinful life, and turning back to God.

1. In **Revelation 9: 20, 21**, John talks about some who did not repent. As it talks of repentance, it talks of specific _____ of which they did not repent. These were actions they refused to stop. Repentance is not just a state of mind, it is actually stopping the sin.

2. The day the church began in Jerusalem, Peter, one of the apostles of Jesus, stood up and preached to several thousand people. He preached about how Jesus died according to God's plan and that God raised him from the dead and made him Lord. He also told them they had crucified Jesus in ignorance. When they heard this, they were convicted and asked Peter what they must do to be saved. According to **Acts 2: 38**, what was Peter's

answer? They should _____ and be _____ in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their _____.

3. According to **Acts 3: 19**, when one repents he turns back to _____.

4. Paul said in **Acts 20: 21** that people must turn to God in _____ and have _____ in our Lord Jesus.

5. According to **Luke 13: 1-3**, Jesus told the people they would perish unless they _____.

Answers: Confession of Jesus as Lord continued: 10. good confession, witnesses; 11. turn away from wickedness; 12. confessed, burn.

Repentance: 1. sins; 2. repent, baptized, sins; 3. God; 4. repentance, faith; 5. repented.

6. We could expand the definition of repentance by speaking of **8 ingredients of true repentance:**

- (1) _____ of sin (acknowledgment)
(Luke 15: 11-32; 2 Corinthians 4: 4; Acts 26: 17, 18; Romans 3: 22, 23).
- (2) _____ for sin (Psalm 38: 8, 9; Luke 7: 36-50; 2 Cor. 7: 8-13; Matthew 26: 75).
- (3) _____ of sin (Nehemiah 9: 13; 2 Sam. 12: 13; 24: 10; Lk. 15: 18, 1; Psalm 38: 18; 1 John 1: 9, 10; Acts 19: 18).
- (4) _____ because of sin (Ezra 9: 6; Luke 7: 36-38; 15: 21)

- (5) _____ of sin (Psalm 97: 10; 119:104, 163; Proverbs. 8: 13; Ecclesiastes 3: 8; Amos 5: 15; John 2: 15).
- (6) _____ from sin – Ezekiel 14: 6; 33: 10, 11; Is. 55: 7; Acts 3: 26; 20: 21; Rev. 9: 20, 21; 1 Pet. 3: 10,11; Mat. 5: 23).
- (7) Producing _____ of _____ (Acts 2: 38; Luke 3: 7-9; 19: 1-10; Acts 26:19, 20; Mat. 7: 21; Rom 12: 9).
- (8) Accepting Jesus as _____ of your life (Colossians 2: 6; Acts 3: 19; 1 Pet. 3: 15; Phil. 2: 9-10).⁷

Answers: 6. Definition of Repentance: (1) Recognition; (2) Sorrow; (3) Confession; (4) Shame; (5) Hatred; (6) Turning; (7) fruits, repentance; (8) Lord.

The Provision or Solution – Our Response to God's Grace in Baptism (Immersion)

1. In **John 3:5**, Jesus told a man by the name of Nicodemus that, "*Unless a man is born of the _____ and of the _____, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.*"

2. According to **Acts 2: 38**, Peter told the people, "*Repent and _____, every one of you in the name of _____ for the _____ of your sins and you will receive the gift of the _____.*"

3. In **Romans 6: 1-7**, we are able to see that through baptism we identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In verse 3 Paul says that when we were baptized into Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his _____.

Verse 4 says that we were buried with Jesus. How does this happen? _____.

According to verse 5, if we have been united with him in his _____, we will certainly also be united with him in his _____.

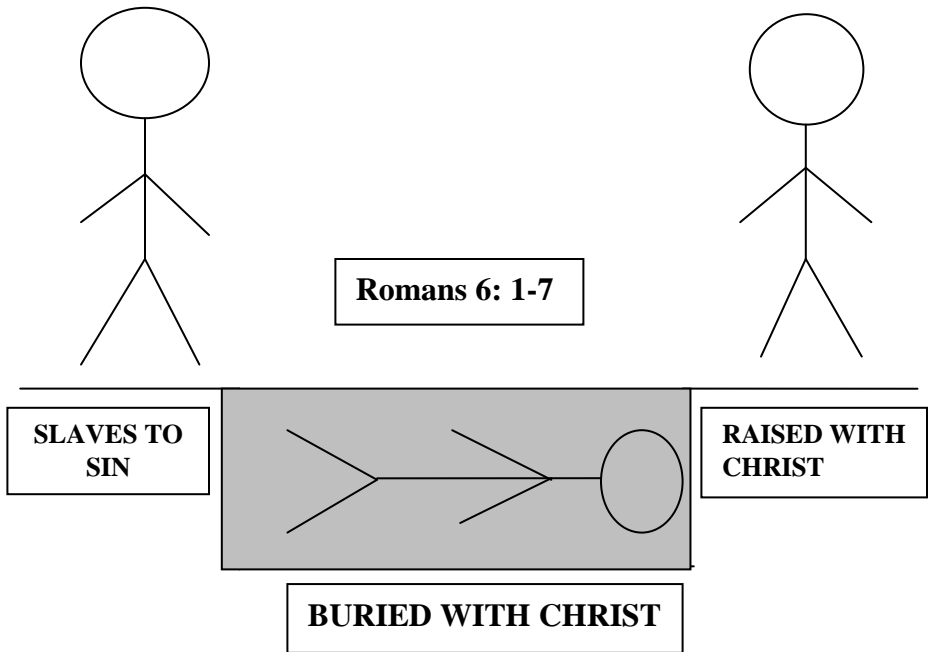
Our old self was _____ with Jesus "so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be _____ to sin" (Verse 6).

Verse 7 says that if we have died with Jesus, we have been freed from _____.

4. In **I Peter 3:21**, Peter says that baptism is an "*appeal to God for a clear conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*" (RSV). Baptism is an appeal to God for a clear _____. Peter says baptism saves us through the _____ of Jesus Christ.⁸

5. According to **Galatians 3: 26-29**, when does Paul say we are "clothed" with Christ? _____

<p>Answers to Response to God in Baptism: 1. water and spirit; 2. be baptized, Jesus Christ, forgiveness, Holy Spirit; 3. death, through baptism, death, resurrection; crucified, slaves, verse 7 – sin; 4. conscience, resurrection; 5. When we are baptized.</p>



The Purpose of Baptism According to the Word of God:

1. So we can follow the way of _____ Matthew. 3: 13-17.
2. So we can follow what Jesus _____ Matthew. 28: 18-20.
3. So we can receive the _____ of sins Acts 2: 38; 22:16.
4. So we can receive the gift of the Holy _____ Acts 2: 38; 1 Cor. 12:13.
5. So that we can identify with Jesus in his death and _____ Romans 6: 1-4.
6. So we can become part of the _____ of Christ 1 Cor. 12: 13; Hebrews 10: 19-25. (See also Acts 2: 47 where it says that the "Lord added to their number...")

7. So we can be _____ with Christ Galatians 3: 26-29.
8. So we can get rid of the old person and become a new _____ 2 Cor. 5: 16-17.
9. So we can be spiritually _____ Colossians 2: 11, 12.
10. So we can receive _____ 1 Peter 3: 21. (See also Mark 16: 16.)
11. So we can be born again of the _____ and _____ John 3: 5. (The word that is used for "again" can also mean from "above." So, one is born again and from above because it is from God.)
12. So, we can be regenerated by God through the washing of _____ and the _____ of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3: 4-6).⁹

<p>Answers to the Purpose of Baptism: 1. Jesus; 2. commanded; 3. forgiveness; 4. Spirit; 5. resurrection; 6. body; 7. clothed; 8. creation; 9. circumcised; 10. salvation; 11. water, Spirit; 12. rebirth, renewal.</p>
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Two more important aspects of Biblical baptism:

1. What happens in baptism is God's work not man's as we can clearly see from Colossians 2: 11-13. Notice that Paul says the spiritual circumcision was not done by “the hands of men,” but by _____ v: 11b. He also says that our faith is in the power of _____ v: 12b.

2. Four important elements of biblical baptism:

- * The proper **mode:** a burial (immersion) (Romans 6:3; Colossians 2:12).
- * The proper **authority:** in the name of Christ (Acts 2: 38; 19:5) or in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit like in Matthew. 28: 19, 20.
- * The proper **purpose:** for the remission of sins (Acts 2: 38; 22:16). But there is more than one purpose, as we have seen from the above list of twelve different Scriptures about baptism.
- * The proper **subject:** a penitent (repentant) believer (Acts 2: 38; 8: 37; Mark 16: 16; John 3: 16; Luke 13: 1-5; Colossians 2:12; 2 Peter 3: 9).¹⁰

Answers to two important points about baptism: Christ, God.
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The Provision or Solution

The cross/blood of Christ
Romans 5: 9; 1 Peter 1: 18-19
"Gift of God" – Romans 6: 23b

The Problem

"For the wages of sin is death
..." (Romans 6: 23)

The Result

"...but the gift of God is eternal
life in Christ Jesus our Lord"
(Romans 6: 23b).

Believe, repent,
confess, receive
Jesus as Lord and
Savior, and be
baptized into Christ
for the forgiveness
of sins and you will
receive the Holy
Spirit (John 3: 16;
Acts 2: 38; Rom.
10: 9, 10; 6: 1-3).
God's grace makes
all this possible
(Ephesians 2: 8-10).

The Result

1. According to **Romans 5:1-2**, what do we have because of being justified by faith?

2. When we are in Christ, we are free from _____ and slaves to _____ according to **Romans 6: 18**.

3. What is the result of being in Christ according to **Romans 6: 23b**? _____

4. Paul tells us in **Romans 8: 1-2** that for those in Christ Jesus there is no _____.

5. According to **Ephesians 1: 7**, what two things do we have in Christ? _____

6. Since we are in Christ, we are no longer _____ and _____, but fellow _____ with God's people and members of God's _____ (**Ephesians 2: 19-20**).

7. According to **1 Peter 1: 3-5**, what are our blessings in Christ?

A new _____

A living _____

An _____ that can never perish, spoil or fade. We are shielded by God's _____ until the coming salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

8. Speaking to Christians in **1 John 1: 9**, John says that if we confess our sins he is faithful and just and will _____ our sins, and _____ us from all unrighteousness.

9. John says in **1 John 5:13**, that if we believe in the name of the Son of God we know that we have _____ life.

10. According to **Acts 2: 38**, what two blessings do we receive when we repent and are baptized?¹¹ _____
_____ and _____

Answers: The Result: 1. Peace; 2. sin, righteousness; 3. Eternal life; 4. condemnation; 5. Redemption and forgiveness; 6. foreigners, aliens, citizens, household; 7. birth, hope, inheritance, power; 8. forgive, purify; 9. eternal; 10. Forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Counting The Cost

Now that you know how to become a Christian you need to first count the cost before you make this commitment. There are many verses in the Bible that tell us about this.

1. Part of counting the cost is to realize that suffering will come if you hold to your faith and beliefs. Paul reminds us that we will suffer in **Philippians 1: 29**, *“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to _____ for him.”*

2. Be ready when you become a Christian to face persecution because it is sure to come. Be ready so that you won't _____. Read Mark 4: 17 for the answer.

3. In **Galatians 6: 12**, Paul speaks of those who seek to avoid persecution by seeking to impress certain people. *“Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being _____ for the cross of Christ.”*

4. Peter tells us in **1 Peter 3: 13-16** how to get ready so that when the persecution comes we will be prepared. He first says in verse fourteen that we should not fear what _____. The first thing that usually defeats us is fear. We are afraid of people because we think they might laugh at us or persecute us in another way.

5. Then Peter goes ahead and tells us how we can defeat those who are persecuting us. In **1 Peter 3: 15a** he says, *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as _____.”* If then Jesus is Lord of our hearts, what do we have to fear from others? Do you want Jesus to be Lord of your heart?

6. Peter tells us another way to be ready for persecution. He encourages us by saying, “Always be prepared to give an _____ to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the _____ that you have. But do this with _____ and _____...” (1 Peter 3: 15b).

Peter goes on by saying, “...*keeping a clear _____, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be _____ of their slander*” (3: 16).

We need to guard our hearts when we are speaking with others and answering their questions so they cannot say anything bad about us. A time will probably come when things will turn around and God will work in an incredible way.

We need to be ready with an answer so we will not be surprised and get confused when we need to speak. Many times when people ask difficult and threatening questions we become confused and often don't know what to say. As a result, we feel very weak and inadequate. But when we pray and study God's Word, God will give us wisdom to know how to answer.

7. What temptations do you anticipate you will face if you decide to become a Christian?

8. Next, Peter instructs us wisely by pointing out, “*It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing _____ than for doing _____*” (1 Peter 3: 17). Can you please everyone all the time? If not, then who would it be best to please, God or man?

9. Finally, Peter reminds us of Jesus, “*For Christ died for sins once for all, the _____ for the _____, to bring you to God*” (1 Peter 3: 18).

When we remember the example of Jesus, we are strengthened. He faced many trials on our behalf so we need to be patient when trials and persecutions come into our lives. How do your trials compare with the trials of Jesus? Jesus knows what we feel when we face trials because of what he went through.

Because of the persecutions and trials that will come, we need to think seriously if we can endure and stand firm in the time of trial. We need to do this before we make a commitment to become a Christian.

We also need to know that God will help us stand firm against anything that might come our way and reward us for our faithfulness. These Scriptures assure us of this: Matthew 16: 24-28; Matthew 19: 29, 30; Mark 10: 28-31; John 14: 1-4; John 16: 33; Romans 8: 38, 39; 1 Corinthians 10: 11-13; 2 Peter 1: 10, 11; 2: 9.

Answers to the blanks on Counting the Cost: 1. suffer; 2. fall away; 3. persecuted; 4. they fear; 5. Lord; 6. answer, hope, gentleness and respect; conscience, ashamed; 8. good, evil, God; 9. righteous, unrighteous.

10. As we are counting the cost we need to remember that when we become a Christian we need to commit ourselves to a body of believers for fellowship and spiritual growth. **Hebrews 10: 24, 25** urges us to do this. He says, “*Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up _____ together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us _____ one another – and*

all the more as you see the day approaching." (Read also these very important verses: Acts 2: 42-47.)

11. **Hebrews 3: 12, 13** says we need to _____ one another daily as long as it is called Today, so than none of you may be hardened by sin's _____.

12. We also need to commit ourselves to grow to be more like Christ – **2 Peter 3: 17, 18**. Peter says, *"Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your _____ position. But _____ in the grace and _____ of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."*

13. The Bible says in **2 Corinthians 3: 18**, *"And we, who with unveiled faces all _____ the Lord's glory, are being _____ into his _____ with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the _____, who is the Spirit."*

14. We trust God to help us change from the inside out. In **Matthew 23: 25-26**, Jesus rebukes the religious leaders for not doing this. He says, *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but _____ they are full of _____ and _____. Blind Pharisee! First clean the _____ of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean."*

15. Jesus says that it is what is on the inside that is the main issue. *"What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of _____, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, _____, adultery, greed, malice, _____, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from _____ and make a man 'unclean'" (Mark 7: 20-23).¹²*

Answers to the blanks on Counting the Cost continued: 10. meeting, encourage; 11. encourage; 12. secure, grow, knowledge; 13. reflect, transformed, likeness, Lord; 14. inside, greed, self-indulgence, inside; 15. men's hearts, murder, deceit, inside.

Concluding Blessing

May God continue to bless you as you follow Jesus. May he give you opportunities daily to bless others as well. May God give you a burning passion to share the way of salvation with others. May you continue to grow in Christ realizing your weakness and your desperate need for him. May you be changed daily into his image. May you love others with the Spirit of Jesus. May you never give up on working out your problems with God. Keep on wrestling in prayer until you sense a peace from God about your problem or need.

I pray that you will always seek peace, pursue it and trust that through this process God will give you joy. I also pray that you will realize that sometimes it is through trials that God grows us, blesses us, and leads us to peace and joy.

May you always see others through the eyes of Jesus and love them with a persistent and non-prejudice love.

May God continue to give you a passionate heart and bold love for the nations. I pray that you will follow the great commission Jesus gave to his disciples in Matthew 28: 18-20.

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13: 14).

End Notes

¹ Introduction by Paul Highfield.

² I, Paul Highfield, have added many new verses and thoughts to this lesson, but many others before me have had input into this booklet. The basic framework and many of the verses are used in the evangelistic studies that Northside Christian church in Springfield, Missouri uses. This first part is my addition. I will put a foot note every time I have made a major addition.

³ Highfield.

⁴ Highfield on Who is Jesus?

⁵ Highfield on God's plan before we were born.

⁶ Highfield – two types of confession and extra verses on repentance.

⁷ Highfield. These ingredients were taken from Thomas Watson's book, *The Doctrine of Repentance*. You can get an online pdf of this book at this site: <http://www.onthewing.org/user/Watson%20-%20Repentance%20-%20Modern.pdf>.

⁸ The translation in the Revised Standard version is to be preferred because of these reasons: (1) Translating it "A pledge of a good conscience" as the NIV does, does not make sense in the context of salvation. This would make one already saved before baptism and defeat Peter's point; (2) Translating it "An appeal" as the RSV does makes more sense because it fits the context of salvation and our appeal is for God to do the cleansing of our conscience instead of us.

⁹ Highfield.

¹⁰ Highfield. The main points are from Wayne Jackson's article on the internet but I have added Scriptures and some clarification.

¹¹ Highfield, The Result.

¹² Highfield, Counting the Cost.